

TOSHIE UEMATSU! Naniwa! DYNAMITE KANSAI! Sugar Sato! HOTTA at DS1 BABY! and other stuff I saw this week or last ten days!

Howdy!

Welcome to DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #32! I watched a bunch of stuff this week and it all kinda became a big blur, which is a good thing. A downer this week was that Glenn sent me a tape and I got mangled remnants of it as it reached my door as the beloved Postal Service denied me Kawada beating the holy shit out of Takayama. On the MAJOR upside, the GAEA programs (FEEL THE GAEAISM) that Glenn sent me survived and they KICKED ASS! WOO-HOO! The best part is that it has everybody's birthdays (Jayzeus! I'm older than Akira Hokuto! YIPES!:) and yes everybody non-Chigusa-Bridge-Club in GAEA is 21 and under except for Toshie (April 14th, 1974) so maybe we can get fabled International Player and all around bastard punk, St.Phil, hooked up with one of the spunky youngsters of GAEA since they are gracing our beloved shores for a little while. (Meiko Schneider? Hmm... that has a ring to it:.) She would wear red to wedding I would think:.) I dipped deeply into the motherload that Loreface- merciless cool-tape-making machine, sent me including the TV version of Dreamslam 1, which will allow everybody to take their shots and get it over with once and for all about this fabled tape:.)

-DREAMSLAM I-4/2/93-Yokohama. (LOREFICE! AWESOME!!!!)

The best match on this baby for me, which is a truncated version since it isn't the Commercial tape- and thus doesn't have the KAORU lucha match that Glenn was extolling the virtues of to me, was the FREAKIN Hotta vs Kansai match which was off the richter scale for INSANE amounts of stiffness. This is one of those rare occasions where Hotta isn't afraid to take a Hellish beating of the nth magnitude. My favorite part is where Kansai is kicking the crap out of Hotta by the guard rail and Hotta gives her the "Is that all you got Punk?" look and then Kansai starts REALLY kicking the holy fudge out of her and starts kicking the guardrail as Hotta gets out of the way. This match was beautiful. The other match that everybody raves about is the Hokuto vs Kandori retirement match and it was a lot of fun but it was basically Benoit vs Sullivan with infinitely better psychology. The main thrust of the psychological aspect of the match is the armbar at the beginning that Hokuto sells like a motherfucker rolling out and onto the floor for an extended amount of time and uses as the basis of the match, in that she must finish the match against her hated rival with a hideously mangled arm. Kandori beats the crap out of her as it goes into the stands and Akira hits a gusher and then Kandori hits a gusher. It's marvelous as Akira finds ways to survive the merciless onslaught while selling the shoulder injury and still firing away with a psychotic offense that has the intensity that is the trademark of all of her greatest matches. The point of injury being established is never lost during the whole match and to sell that while performing the way she did with such a questionable worker as Kandori should clear up any doubts as to who is the greatest woman's wrestler of all time (though it still didn't help her pull a watchable match out of Debbie Combs:.) I'll get to the rest of card next week as I rewatch that and put on my asbestos overalls. ALLRIGHT!:)

-ALL JAPAN WOMEN- Rising Generation Queen commercial tape. 9/1/96- Kuroken (LOREFICE!! WOO-HOO!!)

This tape was amazingly good considering it featured the august talent of the AJW rookies- amazing to the point of having an INCREDIBLY good tagmatch between Sugar Sato and Chikayo Nagashima versus Yumi Fukawa and Rie Tamada for the All Japan Tag titles. This was fast as hell when it had to be and rough as hell when it had to be. Sato and Nagashima were in deep OZ mode- being the hot kinky whirling vixen's of evil that only they can be. Fukawa and Tamada played the Steamboat-esque outraged faces to the hilt and got all bitchy themselves after the thirtieth or so nearfall as these youngsters did it up to the hilt in terms of the "billion save tag match". Sugar is so stoic for eighteen years old and I can't imagine her not being my absolute fave by the time she catches up with the other GAEA gals in terms of non-Nitro repertoire.:) Nagashima is the better worker of the two for now and when these two are in with Fukawa and Tamada- the cream of the AJW spunky youngsters- it looks like it can be real magic. I await the yearly interpromotional rivalry. Sugar gets EXTRA HUGE POINTS for flipping off the crowd as she is leaving and for basically telling her AJW rivals that they could stick it where the sun don't shine (do we have a female TAKA on our hands? JIMINY FREAKIN CRICKETS! I hope so!).

The Chapparita ASARI vs Chiquita Azteca was hit and miss but still pretty fabulous as these are gonna be a great rivalry if Chiquita lives up to the promise that she has hinted at and if Chapparita can stay healthy for a any length of time (and not wrestle with a fuckin broken hip). This is a continuation of the ASARI foray deep into the outer reaches of Lucha Libre as this has more than just the obvious Lucha overtones. The psychology was established by Chiquita as they made it personal and bloody in a Lucha Libre way. Chaparita hits her usual borderline-spectacular highflying moves and Chiquita was toned down a little bit to compared to last time I saw her. ASARI is a bloody mess by the end and they say dramatic things in two languages I don't understand as the tape comes to a finish.

An offhanded Toyota/Candy Okutsu rounds out the tape as these two try to not show up the youngsters and completely pull it off.

Everybody else on this tape has a LONG way to go.

-GAEA Champ Forum. 8/19/96. Somewhere in Japan! WOO-HOO!

This baby starts off with an incredibly okay KAORU vs Yamada match as Yamada's stock falls more and more with me every time she isn't trying to kick the hell out Hotta. KAORU hits her usual assortment of whip ass moonsaults and assorted springboard and lucha-based staples. Yamada is more and more unconvincing as a quasi-shootstyle ass-kicker.

This tape kicks WAY into gear as Meiko Satomura takes on Bomber Hikari in a fabulous submission-hold-filled grappling extravaganza. The true spirit of spunkiness is embodied in the Yamazaki-esque exploits of the fantabulous babe in the red get-up. I say Yamazaki-esque because the last two matches I've seen her in, she has nicked Yamazaki's habit of countering finishing holds of his opponent into cross-armbreakers. The last time I saw a Satumura non-Nitro match (:) she beat Sugar with a reversal of her Tenryu-top-rope-elbow into a CAB. This time it was Bomber's Over-The-Top Powerbomb into a CAB. It was BattlARTsian

(YESSSS!!!!!!) in it's combination of submission holds used in a pro-style way but totally tricked out to work with pro-style psychology (Several submission attempts reversed into counter-submission attempts re-placing near pinfalls yadda yadda.:)) My fave part of the match is when Satomura finally puts Bomber away with her final submission counterhold and has the absolute look of horror and elation of getting her first win over the Bridge Club (tm-CHEETAH!). She rules and is REALLY gonna rule.

A fabulous Kato/Chigusa/Hirota vs OZ/Sato/Nagashima/Reiko Amano ends the tape as this was a large cog in this, the funnest little feud in Women's wrestling, as Chigusa and OZ have a postmatch slugfest and Sonoko Kato gets all incensed that Sugar could become SUCH a bitch and hang out with Ozaki and yells it over the PA. GAEA RULES! Learn to love it.

Meanwhile, a week later on BattlARTS, TAKA Michinoku takes on Minoru Tanaka on the match directly following this tape and I had to watch it despite my stern discipline to watch only Women's wrestling this week.:) This was a thirty minute match that they showed in ten minutes so the hamfistedness of the editing was New Japan-like in its scope. It kinda makes TAKA's selling look a little awkward and he doesn't ever really show what he can do like I've seen in other TAKA shootstyle matches- in that this one never really got to the mat (well the part they showed anyway)- and that's where TAKA rules in these kind of affairs.

-I watched the Michinoku Pro match from ECW saturday and GOLLY! did it rule! Joey Styles was really good calling it (though he blew the call on the Men's Teioh's Dangerous BackDrop Driver which was strange since Doc was just there last month and all) Somehow, they captured the way the matches look on the MP commercail tapes (extreme close-ups on the Sasuke quebradas, what have you) I'm sure it wasn't a conscious effort, but it had that feel anyway.:) Kudos all around. Togo whipped ass and TAKA was subdued- I guess saving up for the PPV to do the Springbaord Moonsault and what have you, though he hit a Michinoku Driver II. Hamada ruled as usual as he continues to hang with the young punks. Sasuke was Sasuke which means GREAT! Naniwa FINALLY hit his Crab-Walk-Elbow! I Fell Out!

The rest was the usual average wrestling and average brawling. The Full Blooded Italians angle hit an even higher pinnacle of AWESOMENESS which I figured would have maxed out at Tommy Rich being inducted, as Tracy Smother's was inducted and I think I wept loves easy tears as I thought of my favorite redneck ass-stompers all there together pissing off Philadelphians.:) If they get Dirty White Boy, ECW will have reached a new pinnacle of greatness of re-establishing the greatness of the Great Southern ShitKicker Heel. I am STOKED Beyond Recognition!

-Nitro sucked, but HELL! it's Toshie Uematsu RIGHT THERE ON MY MOTHERFUCKING TV SET so I don't mind that her three minute match against Meiko was really crappy. Gee, I hope they let Satomura do something at the TV tapings since she is the best of GAEA crop and they allowed her to do absolutely NOTHING in this squash. My guess is that if it went any longer the WCW boys thought the crowd might turn on them or something, which they didn't even if they didn't rally round them. But I digress, I should commend WCW for bringing these gals over

because HELL! they don't need to even try to establish a women's division but it looks like they are going full speed ahead, though in a very goofy way (Debbie Combs vs Akira Hokuto is SO surreal, and SO bad.:)). I also LOVE the fact that WCW is establishing belts that are gonna add importance to the GAIA matches I get from Glenn and Ollie on Champ Forum (those are usually longer than three minutes:)) because I really can't see it having that big of an impact on the US and the "gift to GAIA" scenario is the only way I can spin it.:) I was talking to Hungover Birthday boy Phil today and we were both amazed that this belt even exists. I told him that this such an incomprehensibly balls-out move by WCW that I would order a PPV with a Women's Cruiserweight Title match on it even if it was Duggan vs the Booty Man at the top.:) How could I possibly be upset, just let the little gals go five minutes at least next time, ya stupid jerks. The Psicosis vs Villano IV match was pretty hip I guess, though PPV's is the only way to see these guys have a decent time allotment in the US. Villano did some nifty Lucha things you usually don't see on US television.

Over on RAW, I was digging El Mosco and Super Nova though it was the blownspotfest 97-especially the Too-Tricky-for-Prime-Time-Unless-You-Are-Actually-Rey-Misterio-Jr springboard backwards rana, they are young and green and it was goofy but it was fun. I can't complain, but sometimes I still do.:)

CHEETAH~!